

**Political History Collection
Interview H.0004.11 : Tape 11**

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Name: Alo Chöndze

Gender: Male

Age: 74

Date of Birth: 1919

Abstract

Alo Chöndze was a major leader of the People's Association in Tibet and India in the 1950s. In this interview, he continues from tape 10 to describe in great detail, the preparations made for the Dalai Lama activities (audiences and teachings) in Sichuan when he returned from Beijing in 1955. He also discusses the Dalai Lama's welcome delegations when he came to Lhasa. Finally, he talks about the arrest of himself and the other two leaders of the People's Association in 1956, and their interrogation and then his release and decision to go to India. He also discusses the beginning of the Litang Revolt against the Chinese.

Tape 11

A: Then they told me to send them a list of the things that would be offered for the tenshug [longevity rite], though I couldn't go in person. Then I made the list and sent them to the drönyerchemmo. Then he said, "Tomorrow the Dalai Lama is going to give the religious teaching that Litang Monastery has requested. We have prepared the throne very well." The drönyerchemmo said, "Before you welcome the Dalai Lama, first the lamas of the monastery and the pön have to receive him." The day before when we were up there, I saw that the pön were not there, and when I asked them why didn't they come, they said that they were not allowed to. So the monastery and the farmers almost became like this [probably touching the back side of his hands to imply opponents]. On this matter, I could do a great historic job which benefited both the villagers and the monastery. Then I told them that we had to perform the reception, like the religious procession where monks carry sacred items [Tib. ser sbreng], and play the trumpets and the gyaling when the Dalai Lama comes to give the teaching. Then the small Litang lama Shogdrub Kyamgön [Tib. shog sgrub skyabs mgon], the abbots and the ex-abbots, and the chandzö should stand in a line. Many villagers could not come there, so Yönrupön, Changpapön, and Uthogpön would have to receive the Dalai Lama.

Secondly, when the Dalai Lama came, he rested in a tent for a while when all of the people arrived at the teaching grove. Then we invited the Dalai Lama to the throne and at this time, we needed the incense guide [Tib. spos sna], the person carrying incense and guiding the Dalai Lama. With this, we gained a great victory for common Tibet. As for the first incense guide, there were to be three people and then he would be seated on the throne. As for the three people, the first was the abbot of Litang, the second was the Litang Shogdrub Kyamgön. Then among the pön, Yönrupön was to be the third one. As soon as he was seated on the throne, we had to offer him a khata to celebrate his arrival. For that, the next abbot, the Shungpapön and I, put the pön (chiefs) among these abbots. I said, "You people told me to do these formalities. When I do these, will you accept it?" They said [they would] accept it 100 percent. Then I made a list of all the gifts and when the teaching was over, there should have been incense guides also. Anyway, I made it so the three pön [were] included in all of these activities, and there were also the chandzö and the nyerpa, and the monastic officials of Litang Monastery were also involved in it. Litang Monastery also accepted whatever I did. I made a list of all the gifts for the Dalai Lama that night, and I didn't have time to sleep. The next day, the drönyerchemmo made all the arrangements. There was a big tent for the kitchen and also for the storeroom, and we had a lot of butter, meat and dried fruits. At that time, all of the people were just receiving the teaching but were not attentive of the kitchen, the storeroom and the cooking. So I got an idea to call the Dalai Lama's cooks, who were tsidrun (monk officials), who were experts in cooking, and all of the kudrak had servants. I thought of making them do the cooking. We had already prepared the tea and those things. As we had arranged the accommodations for the kudrak, I called the servants and the Dalai Lama's cook. Then I told them, "This is the kitchen and the storeroom of the Litang Monastery [group], and we have all the foodstuffs in it. You servants should eat and drink as you wish, and nobody will tell you [not to] eat and drink. But in the future, do not say that Litang Monastery didn't give you food to eat." I know the servants would talk a lot about how so and so didn't prepare the food well, and how the kudrak wouldn't say that they didn't get food. Then I told the chief cook of the Dalai Lama to make the food called trumtsag [Tib. dkrum rtsag], which is rice soup with meat usually served during ceremonies in the Potala. At that time, the Dalai Lama and his retinue almost didn't yak meat so they got

very delicious food then. I also told the servants to help serve tea to the kudraks and those people. On that day, the ceremony went on very well. All of the kungö and the servants were very glad.

Then we performed the tenshug and the ceremony went on, and when they received the teaching, the sponsors would sit in front and behind him, the lamas and the geshe would be seated. Then I let Yönrupön, Changpapön and Shungpapön be seated in the front and they were included among the sponsors. Everything went off very well. Performing the tenshug in Litang Rangakga was a very important matter. When the tenshug was performed, we would offer gifts to the Dalai Lama, and in return, the sponsors would also be given woolen materials by the Tibetan government. This was given to the lamas and the abbots. And the three pön and the people also got an audience. On the next day, the Dalai Lama was to leave. So in short, the monastery and the villages didn't have to fight and they had solidarity. After the Dalai Lama left, there were many people coming to give me khata scarves saying, "You are great." Then they told me that they wanted me to help them have an audience in the Dalai Lama's room. So I told them that I would request that to the drönyerchemmo, and that it would probably be okay. At that time, the main lama was the Shogdrug Kyamgön, who was about 10-11 years old and whose strand of hair was yet to be cut for becoming a monk [Tib. dbu phud]. Later, you should meet him and talk about me. Shogdrug Labrang had requested the Ling [Tib. gling] Rimpoche to have his strand of hair cut, but I told them, "Since Ling Rimpoche is a great lama, and since the Dalai Lama is here, it would very good if he cut his strand of hair." But the chandzö said, "We wouldn't dare ask the Dalai Lama to do this." I said, "No problem, you should make the request. Maybe you will get it. If you don't get it, Ling Rimpoche can do it." Then I went to the drönyerchemmo and told him, "Please ask the Dalai Lama to cut the strand of hair for Shogdrug Rimpoche. And he is also requesting an audience, and there are about 15-16 people who are lamas, abbots and the chandzö. Please give them an audience in the Dalai Lama's room. Secondly, Yönrupön has a few people, so please give them an audience. Thirdly, please give an audience to the Shungpapön and those people." The drönyerchemmo said in a happy manner, "All of these will be okay. You prepare scissors and rice and so on for cutting the strand of hair." When I told the chandzö of Shogdrug Labrang about this, he was so glad and said, "This time we are grateful to you for doing all of this." The next day, the Dalai Lama came to his tent and gave all of those people an audience. It was not the place where the throne was placed.

From my private side, I had to do something in my homeland. There were elderly people, and bandits and thieves, and they inquired of me if they could get some blessed pills or something. The next day, we held a big meeting which all the pön and the lamas of the monastery attended, and they were very glad. Then I told them that I had something to request of them and said, "I am Ashi Yönrü Horayingpa, and many of my lineage and the relatives of my homeland have come here. There are about 10 or so elderly here. You people are going to get the audience, but please give me permission to ask [about] an audience for the elderly. If permission is granted, I will ask for the audience." All of them said, "Of course, this is okay." Then I said, "You have gathered the people and told them that they are not allowed to ask for an audience privately. That's why I am asking for permission." Then I asked the drönyerchemmo for an audience for my elderly relatives as well. When we got the audience, the Dalai Lama said, "What are you here for?" I told him, "These are my elderly relatives from my homeland. I am asking for an audience." He said, "This is okay." And he gave them the hand blessing and the blessed ribbon [Tib. gsung mdud]. The best thing was that the Dalai Lama thought in a very good way. We were to leave the next day. At that time, Amdo Gyetong and Bisu were there to receive the teachings, but were not involved in these activities although they had seen all of these things.

On that day, I received a message from the drönyerchemmo calling me. He said that the Dalai Lama was going to give his satin cloak to Litang Monastery as a gift. He said he was going to hand it over to the monastery and that we should come to get it. We went early at dawn and brought the satin cloak from the Dalai Lama's secretariat back to the monastery. At this time, we burned incense and blew a trumpet and the gyaling, and it was placed on the throne that I had offered and we held the ceremonies.

Then we did something which was the duty of the People's Association. We left aside the lamas like Shogdrug Kyamgön, and under them we had a meeting with 22 important Litang people. Among them there were the three of us, the chiefs like Yönrupön, et cetera. Then we put the Dalai Lama's clothes on the throne and we said, "Today, it is a very auspicious day, and we are doing the work for the Tibetan People's Association." We also said what the Tibetan People's Association did in the past and that the representatives who were there were also in Lhasa. "In the future, after returning to Lhasa, we can't stay idle. It would not be okay if we didn't oppose the Communist Chinese through both military and peaceful means." Then we talked a lot about how to do that. Finally, we said, "After we get back, we are going to oppose the Chinese using peaceful means. If peaceful opposition works out, that's it. If it doesn't work out, then we have to oppose through military means. Until then, you are not allowed to do anything." And we said that and took an oath.

Q: How did you take the oath?

A: First, the Tibetan People's Association would go back and after we reached there, we would do things like performing the tenshug for the Dalai Lama. Finally, we would oppose the Chinese and we would try to block the formation of the Tibet Autonomous Region and get the Chinese to leave. If we achieved this, we said we would just keep quiet and not do anything. If we did not achieve this, then we said that the people in Litang should start the war and start shooting and killing the Chinese.

Q: Who were the others who took the oath?

A: After we put the Dalai Lama's [cloak] on the throne, we prayed. There were probably 1-2 from among the abbots. The other lamas, like Chogdrug Kyamgön, the abbots, and the monks, went back. And the important and better people who could work, like the chandzö, remained, and altogether there were 22 people. Nineteen of them were monks and three were pön: Yönrupön, Dzarupön [Tib. rdza ?ru dpon] and so on. We said, "When we go back, we will oppose the Chinese through peaceful means, and give a petition to the Chinese on the matter of the Tibet Autonomous Region and about having the Chinese go back (leave Tibet). We will not shoot guns. If this works out, you don't need to shoot the Chinese in Kham. If this doesn't work, you should rise up here in Litang and start the war." Everyone agreed with this.

As for the way to do this, there were some Litang traders and we agreed that 3-4 men should stay in Dartsedo saying that they

were doing trade, while the pön and the other people should return to Litang. "We can't talk much or send many letters, and we can't send people. So we will send a telegram from Lhasa to Dartsedo. As soon as you get the telegram, you should go to Litang right away. They will be able to reach there the next day by crossing the pass." I said, "There will only be two words in the telegram. We can't put many words in it." When we asked them whether they agreed or not, all agreed saying, "We will do just what you have said. It is really suspicious."

Then we said, "Let us take an oath in front of the throne on which the Dalai Lama's cloak was placed," and there we drank the oath water [the water from the water offering bowl]. 22 people took the oath saying that we had solidarity on this matter. Then we decided which people would stay in Dartsedo and we told them, "When we send the telegram if it says, 'Send the tea.' [Tib. ja gtong shog], this means the peaceful opposition in Lhasa has worked out. So there is no problem and you should stay quiet and just do your farming and animal husbandry work, and the monks should hold their prayer assembly meetings as before. If you receive the telegram that it didn't work out, 'Don't send the tea.' [Tib. ja ma gtong shog], then from that day on, start the fighting." This was done auspiciously on that evening, and early the next morning I was to leave.

At that time, the pön were staying in tents and they came to see me individually. I was so tired that I didn't have time to close my eyes or even go to urinate. Then, early in the morning, the drönyerchemmo sent a message that said, "The Dalai Lama told me to summon the three pön before they leave." That person [bringing the message] was probably Ngawang Rigdrol. When I asked when we should come he said, "If you can't come within such and such time, he [Dalai Lama] is leaving at such and such time." Then I called Yönrupön and the other pön, and fortunately they came in about ten minutes. I told them, "The Dalai Lama has called you three pön." The three of them were scared and said, "What could it be?" I said, "What else could it be? It is good because the Dalai Lama called you. If it was the Chinese Communists, they would behead you." Then I told them to get prepared to go with me. We had many khata scarves there. And then the three pön and I went. I was riding a horse and they sent so many khata and [so much] money along with me that I had to throw some of them away along the way. The Chinese had taken out the vehicles for the trip and were ready to leave. Then the drönyerchemmo said that the Dalai Lama was going to give them an audience in his room, "So each of you should just offer a khata and he will give you the hand blessing." Then they had an audience and they got more than Litang Monastery did, e.g., the photo of the Dalai Lama, the blessing pills and a very big khata called Nangdzö. When the pön came out, they told me to stay there, but I said I couldn't. And then I left after five minutes. We touched our cheeks and I told them, "I don't have anything to say other than the oath we took yesterday. In the future, I will come to Litang." Then we five, the representatives of the Tibetan People's Association, returned to Lhasa.

At that time, there were many representatives in Chamdo also. And we went to Lhasa and prepared for the reception in Tse Gungtang [Tib. tshal gung thang] for the Dalai Lama for when he came back by vehicle. From Tse Gungtang to Lhasa, it would be the great procession [Tib. chibs sgyur chen mo] where the Dalai Lama would be carried in a sedan chair and all of his retinue would ride horses. I ordered several thousand peacock feathers from India for the People's Association to use as a substitute for flowers when we welcomed the Dalai Lama. Later, they [?] stopped us [from] carrying peacock feathers and the khata. When I arrived in Lhasa, there was still quite a lot of time before the Dalai Lama would arrive because he had to visit monasteries on the way.

I rode my motorcycle and made the preparations in Tse Gungtang, and we also held meetings for the reception. At that time, they invited the Dalai Lama to Ganden, but he couldn't go and it became like at Litang Monastery. The reception was prepared in the Tsangthog, which was located below Ganden. So Ganden Monastery told me, "The Dalai Lama is coming, but he is not coming to the monastery. Since we have to prepare the accommodations on the open field, please take overall charge for the preparations [Tib. phebs sgrig spyi khyab]." I couldn't refuse, but I told them that I couldn't stay there permanently and do that, but I would come for a short time sometimes and make the arrangements. I also had to take care of the accommodations in Tse Gungtang. Then I went to Tsangthog and helped show how to arrange and pitch the tents and prepare the foodstuffs since I was familiar with this.

One day, when Ngawang Rigdrol and I came down riding motorcycles, we met a herd of many donkeys, and no matter how many times we blew our horns, the herders didn't stop the donkeys. So when I rode ahead, my motorcycle hit a donkey herder and he fell down. Ngawang Rigdrol was after me and he said, "I swear by the three jewels that you knocked this man down." Actually, if we just rode away, it would have been nothing because there was one herder still left there. Then when the two of us got down from the motorcycles, we found that the donkey herder's leg was broken. So we asked his name and the People's Association had to send him to the hospital.

Then the Dalai Lama came to Tsangthog and the ceremonies were held the next day. The Dalai Lama was carried in the sedan from Tse Gungtang and the People's Association acted just like we did when the Dalai Lama came from India because the drönyerchemmo helped us. At that time, I told all of the members that we had to wear chupa made from serge and should not wear Indian boots or shoes. We had to wear Tibetan boots and ride horses. On that day, there was a very heavy rainfall, and the procession started from Tse Gungtang and brought sedan chairs to the Jensei Palace in Norbulinga. None of the kudrak had raincoats and their satin chupas were spoiled. If the kudrak had worn raincoats, they would have worn raincoats made from serge [Tib. sgo snam]. But on that day, none of them brought raincoats.

Q: Tell about the peaceful opposition of the People's Association. Did your group paste posters around Lhasa?

A: No. We didn't do posters and the Mönlam leaflets. The peaceful opposition was what I told you about the meeting held in Songra and so on, but the peaceful opposition didn't work out.

Q: Bisu says Jenkhentsisum sent posters via a monk called Ashang [Tib. a zhang], and one via an ex-monk called Jordrag [Tib. 'byor grags]. The People's Association was told to read one of the letters at your meeting. Do you recall this?

A: No, I don't remember that at all. I never heard this. From among the three runaway tsidrung, Champa Tsündrū came to our office in Songra and told me that I should come there [India] and that Jenkhentsisum were there. He said, "If you, Alo Chöndze, cannot, please send a representative." I didn't give him an answer like yes or no. Then I met Drönyerchemmo and Namseling and

told them that Champa Tsündrū said that Jenkhentsisum was there so it would be good to make a connection. Before that, Jenkhentsisum had no connections with us. I had some important things to tell them about Litang and on the peaceful opposition. In Dharamsala, they performed a show on Yönrupön. This was not performed well, but [we] just left it.

Finally, the Tibetan government couldn't do anything to the Chinese, and after that, they set up the Tibet Autonomous Region, and let alone stopping it, the Tibetan government supported it. In the meantime, our association dispersed. The three of us were arrested, accused of throwing the letters at the Mönlam. This was on the 15th. We three were put in jail on the 19th. Now thinking back on it, I wonder if it was the policy of the Communist or Gyalo Thondup. They threw many posters [Tib. yig skur] saying that the Chinese Communists were bad. This is called the poster which talks behind the people's backs. They didn't straightforwardly come out and say that, but they just stuck the poster behind the people. For the purpose of instigating, they just went through the motions of destroying the posters, but when many people read it, it was pleasant sounding because the wording was quite good with saying the Communists were bad. They accused the Tibetan People's Association of distributing it. But not a single member of the People's Association had gone to distribute this. The letters were thrown on the 15th and they arrested me on the 19th at the police station, though we and the Police Regiment soldiers had the same thoughts internally. So I was put in the apartment of a gyagpön (captain). At first, it was just me. Bumtang Trunyi and Lhabju were yet to arrive. It was just a house arrest. I called Gombo Tashi and several Litang people, and also [individuals] from among the representatives of the People's Association. They were allowed to come in because we were like this [close], and later we also played a little bit of mahjong. Then we discussed the major principles [issues] and I said, "Now, the People's Association's peaceful opposition hasn't worked out. The People's Association has been dispersed and we are imprisoned. So we can't do the movement." Now it was time to send the telegram stating whether to send the tea or not. Then I told them to send the telegraph right away to Dartsedo saying, "Don't send the tea. [Tib. ja gtong ma yong]." They can [couldn't?] go outside because they were prisoners. Then we said that we should watch what happened. In the future, maybe, we would be killed in the jail. Since the leaders of the regiment were the same (?) as us, we met them.

Q: If Litang were to start the war, what good was it if the other areas didn't fight?

A: There were representative of Litang among the representatives of the People's Association.

Q: No, I mean you only had the connection with Litang, right? You sent the telegram to tell them to start the war. According to your thinking, what was the benefit for Litang to fight alone?

A: I will tell you later and all the benefits will come out. In general, there were many Litangba among the representatives of the People's Association, like Gombo Tashi, Jamatsang and Gyadotsang. Gyadotsang mainly distributed the guns and came to Lhasa with the People's Association. When I went to receive the Dalai Lama, we met Litang people and mediated the quarrel between the farmers and the monastery. Before we left, we and Yönrupön cried and did those things. I heard that they would send the telegram on the 19th of the 1st month, saying not to send the tea bricks. After they received the telegram in Dartsedo, they sent it to Litang. After 5-6 days, the new story of Litang started, and they have made a drama on that. But they didn't ask us and just made it. The fighting started. Then the famous Yönrupön, I have his photo here, Uthogpön and three of them prepared for war right away. They fought with the Chinese who were there and started the war at that place and killed each other. Then many Chinese troops came from all directions. So the fighters went inside the walls of Litang Monastery and they were saying that they had to defend the monastery. This was after killing people in Tsachuka [Tib. tshwa chu kha]. Then when they were inside the wall, the Chinese told them, "Come out of the monastery and surrender. We will not punish [you] for the shooting. If you don't come out, we will burn the monastery." I heard this from Gyadotsang who came from Litang. So they had a meeting in the monastery and some said, "If the monastery was burned, then there would be no use killing the Chinese." As I told you, they would sacrifice their lives for the religion. Then there were the people like Yönrupön and Deyong Atrin [Tib. de yong a 'phrin] et cetera. The better ones were the 22 people who led the people, and they went into the big temple in Litang Monastery and prayed. They had protective talismans and at that time Yönrupön took off his talisman and hung it inside the temple. Then he came out saying, "I will surrender tomorrow or the day after tomorrow." They had fixed a time. The Chinese prepared their soldiers and set up many chairs on the field at the front of the monastery, and the leaders and local people were also called there to watch. There were thousands of people and [they] said, "You are good to come and surrender. So please come." Then they opened the gate of Litang Monastery, and Yönrupön and the others came out carrying rifles and pistols. I heard that they had discussed, "It is better to die rather than getting the Litang Monastery burned. So we should surrender." Then they put the pistol called Chizipoten [?] inside their pouches. The highest Chinese officer of Litang Monastery was one who had the nickname crooked eyed. Each of them said, "I will take care of him and you take care of that [one]," and made the assignments. When they opened the gate and came out with the khata scarves, the Chinese were glad. When they were in front of the Chinese general, Yönrupön put down the rifle and surrendered with the khata. As soon as he put down the rifle, he took out the pistol and killed the highest officer. The other fighters also killed as many as they could and then they shot themselves. And he could fulfill his wish. This was Yönrupön's story. But in Dharamsala, Maya [Tib. rma bya] and those people edited the story without asking us. Later, the Chinese burned Litang Monastery and we were also destroyed. Because of that, the war in all of the areas beyond the Yangtse River, like Ba, Chantreng, Gyeltang, Derge, Doba—all rose up, except Triu [Tib. tre hor] [Ganzi]. Finally, when the Chinese couldn't handle them, they sent airplanes and bombed them. One was supposed to bomb Ba, but by accident, they also bombed Markham Monastery, even though Markham did not rise up. Like this, the famous war in south Kham took place. Gyado phu was there and Gyado Ashang made preparations and came to Lhasa. And then the support of the Americans like airdropping people, started. The main son of Gyado, Wangdü went down [to Litang] and led the people.

Q: Did the Litang War just arise or was there a plan to start the war in Litang?

A: Yönrupön and those [people] wanted to fight the Chinese before that and they had the thought of killing the Chinese, but Yönrupön held them [off for] a little bit. We were saying, "We should fight the Chinese at the right time because we would suffer a loss if we were to fight the Chinese at first. So we should do the peaceful work first." [Talks about Zhou Enlai in India].

Q: Please tell us about the events in Tibet.

A: I was imprisoned on the 19th and at the beginning of the second month, the Litang War took place. So we were saying that it was useless to stay in Tibet. Whatever we did to the Chinese, peaceful or military, we would be eliminated. But we had accomplished our duty. So it would be better to go abroad.

Q: Who did you talk about this with?

A: There were three of us [detained]. Andrutang, the other representatives, and I talked about that. We were saying that we didn't know when we would get out of the jail. Then we talked about what to do with our documents. We decided to send them along with the petition to the UNO, and to the Buddhist Association via Amdo Gyetong to India so that the Chinese wouldn't get them. And we decided to die there. After a few days, they released Lhabju and Bumtang Trunyi.

Q: What would Gyetong have to do in India after he went to India with the documents?

A: Amdo Gyetong was a very good and enthusiastic representative. And he was Shakabpa's trader and Shakabpa was his main sponsor. He went sacrificing his life if caught. If we were caught, we would have to sacrifice his life. He was to take them to Jenkentsisum. Otherwise, he didn't have anything to do in India. When the documents got there, Gyalo Thondup was to do that work.

Q: In the document, there was the list of names of members of the People's Association, right?

A: Yes, there was.

Q: And there was the petition to the UNO, right?

A: No, it wasn't among the documents. That was taken separately.

Q: What else was there among the documents?

Q: The documents on how the People's Association first started, what rituals were performed, what the plans were like on making the map of Lhasa, and the plan on what we should do in 1959. What the method [strategy] would be best if they were to take the Dalai Lama away to China. The method was to gather many people together. I will write a petition to the Dalai Lama to hand over the documents to me or Dr. Goldstein.

Q: I will send a letter and try to get that.

A: While we were in the jail, we could send Amdo Gyetong.

Q: How many months passed since you were imprisoned until Gyetong went to India? You were released on the 29th of August, right?

A: My son Trinley Thöndrub [Tib. 'phrin las don grub] was born in August, and in August, I went to India.

Q: You went to India on the 8th of October?

A: It was August when I was released from the jail. When I had spent about 6-7 months in the jail, in the Phodrang Sarpa [Tib. gsar pa] [in Norbulinga], there were many Chinese, and kudraks like Trunyichemmo Angula, and interpreters, and they interrogated us one by one. When we would go in there, the Chinese would draw out their guns. I was brought with many police. When the Tibetan kudrak, like Yuthok, were there, they interrogated me saying that I had rebelled against the CCP. The main question was whether the People's Association was incited by the US, the Guomindang and the Indian reactionaries. "You, yourself, didn't do that. So who was connected with you? Tell us this." They asked that question every time. The next day, Bumtang Trunyi, and on the next day, Lhabju were interrogated in the same way. We were all saying that we didn't have that [connections]. This was the truth.

Q: Were there Chinese when you were being interrogated?

A: No. There were a lot of Tibetan officials like Angula, Yuthok, the abbots and the representatives of the three great monasteries and others, but no Chinese. But our Association had no connections with the US, the Guomindang or India, and we did our movement by ourselves. They did this for about 10-15 days after we were arrested. Then after some time, there was questioning by a joint Tibetan and Chinese group. We told them we had no relations with any outside forces, we were started internally. When the kudrak interrogated us, we replied in a polite way. The Chinese also spoke a little bit through the interpreter about relations with the US and the Guomindang. So we used the words used when scolding people and said, "Kei." "Hey! You, tell us! What connections did we make with the US or the Guomindang? You tell me! We don't have anything to tell you." We had already sacrificed our lives, so we weren't afraid of anyone. If we died, we would [only] be afraid of the Lord of Death [Tib. gshin rje chos rgyal]. Then Yuthok, who was the Tibetan judge, told us, "You shouldn't use this language. Isn't this a joint office of Tibet and the Chinese? Aren't you going to talk nicely?" Then we said, "Yes." We three all said the same thing. Then I heard that at their meeting, the Chinese told the Tibetans to whip us during the interrogation. But the Tibetan interrogators and us were like this [close]. They and Yuthok gave them a good answer saying, "You always say that our customs of whipping are oppressing the people, so it would be inappropriate to do this now." So they [Chinese] became better.

Q: Who said that?

Q: They said that Yuthok or Trunyichemmo said that.

Q: They said that when you were not there, right?

Q: Yes. So the Chinese had to put their fingers in their mouths and there was no whipping. At that time, there was the police gyagpön. We made relations with Künsangtse, who was also one of the interrogators. They gave me the messages about this through the gyagpön. They also said that Lhabju was in his seventies and Bumtang in his sixties, so, for this reason, it was not good.

When the Tibetans interrogated us they said, "We know that you didn't have any connections with the US or the Guomindang, but when you answer, answer nicely and in a polite way. If you talk in that way, the Chinese with guns might shoot and there will be a disturbance." The three of us were kept in separate quarters in the Tromsikang. I called Lhabju who was in his seventies and Bumtang who was in his sixties to my quarters, and we discussed it and I said, "The Chinese told the Tibetans to whip us during our interrogation. But our kungö said they couldn't do that because the Chinese said that whipping is oppressing people, and they have decided not to whip us. I think it would be good if they whipped us. I am 37 years old, so it would be good if they whipped me. The whippers will be Tibetans as the Chinese don't know how to whip, and they won't whip us hard. What do you think?" Bumtang and Lhabju then said, "We don't care whether they whip us or whatever they would do to us."

Q: Why would it have been good if they whipped you?

A: If they whipped us, we wouldn't have anything to say and the work would be done. The Chinese thought that if we were whipped, we would say that we had connections with the US, the Guomindang, or Indians, like thieves say when they gave them the electric shocks. Then I told them an example of how during the Reting regency, Khyungram was whipped. Khyungram was very old and fat and his partner was the grandfather of Thubden Tsering [Tib. thub bstan tshe ring]. When the two of them were arrested and punished, I was there watching. Oh! My lama! The shape ministers were there. Jogtang was there and the two of them were whipped in Shöl Legung, and their butts were covered with sores. Then they made them ride oxen, and one was banished to Tö Ngari [Tib. mnga' ris] and the other to Kham. They were whipped so badly, but they didn't die. Since it was an internal whipping, there were many ways of whipping. When they whipped Khyungram, [he] was so old that each whip made a sore. But, now when they whip us, the tip of the whip touches the ground. Even if they would whip us 100 times, since they were internal Tibetans, "It is good that you two said that you will accept whipping, but they won't whip [you] severely." So we sent the message through the gyagpön to Yuthok saying, "When the Chinese told you to whip us, you said you would not. You had mercy on us, but please tell the Chinese that it would definitely be good to whip us." The next time, when we went there, I said, "You are saying that I was something of a US imperialist, but I am not. If this is the case, according to the law, you can whip us or put wooden shackles on us. We don't care which punishment you want to give us." The Chinese said they would not do that and later they didn't get proof. Meanwhile, when seven months had passed, the Kashag, or Surkhang, put forward a smart idea that the three great monasteries should mediate between us.

Q: What I heard was that Andrutsang went to the three great monasteries, isn't that correct?

A: At first, they made connections with the kudrak, like Drönyerchemmo and Namseling. On this matter, we and Andru did a lot. There were many people in the People's Association doing that work. But the first idea was not from Andru. It was the Kashag's, the drönyerchemmo's and Yuthok's, and they thought that it would not be okay if they would leave them like that [detained]. Since nothing came out of their interrogation, the Chinese couldn't tell them to leave them. So if we would leave with the three great monasteries in between, it would be nice looking and appropriate, and they could get released. From the representatives, they went to make connections with the khamtsen which they belonged to [Tib. thob khungs]. Finally, we guaranteed to the three that if they released us, we would not get involved in such politics. The monasteries told the Kashag and the Kashag told the Chinese and the Chinese said okay. At this time, Lhabju died, so there was only me and Bumtang.

Then the Kashag called Bumtang and I. That day, all of the abbots of the three great monasteries were there. Usually, lower people, and even the lower ranking kudrak, couldn't go into the Kashag. But on this day, they called us into the room. They said, "From now, on you cannot do the work of the People's Association. You are allowed to do livelihood work, but not politics. Today, the three great monasteries have guaranteed [vouched for] your future behavior, putting their common seal, so we are releasing you." We said, "We accept this and in the future, we will do no political work." The three great monasteries put their common seal on the guarantee agreement. That day we went home. We, however, first went to the Tromsikang Regiment to pick up our stuff. But we decided to stay that night and then go home the next morning. We sent a message to the People's Association saying that tomorrow we were being released, so they should come to the gate of the Tromsikang to welcome us. I also sent a message home about this. Then the next day, there were a lot of people who came to greet our release. They were mostly Amdos and Khambas. My wife and daughter, Dekyi, came. All the people were doing prayers, saying that the three jewels had done this et cetera. So I didn't go home immediately. First, I went for the pilgrimage to the Tsuglagang Temple, and then to the Ramoche Temple with my wife and the members of the People's Association. At this time, my house was in Pele Tsongkhör. The representatives of the People's Association stood in line showing respect to me from Taring's house to our house. Most of them were the representatives of Kham and Amdo. There were just a few from Ütsang.

At this time, the revolt in Litang was going on and there were so many khambas welcoming me. Because of this, the Chinese complained to the Kashag and the Kashag was extremely scared. So the Kashag sent someone to me. "You, Alo Chöndze, bring your seal and come to the Kashag." This was after I reached home. The next day I went to the Kashag. Kadrung Dumrala [Tib. bka' drung ldum ra lags] was there. He brought a message writing board and said, "You should write that you will not do the People's Association's work in the future in accordance with yesterday's guarantee agreement." I said, "My writing isn't good. Would you please write it and I will seal it?" He did and then I signed it. Dumra then took this to the Kashag. Then he returned with the letter and said, "You also have to sign on it (the samdra board)." So I did, and then returned home and made plans to go to India. Then Surkhang said that he would not come to my house any more and so he didn't come. So I went to India.

At the time I arrived in India, the Kashag sent an edict to Yuthok and the trunyichemmo saying that Zhang Jingwu and those Chinese held meetings and said that he was terrible and that they were pressuring the three great monasteries saying that you are the guarantor. The Kashag wrote in the edict, "Alo Chöndze should return immediately. Here the Chinese are making the three great monasteries have a very hard time because they have put their seal on the agreement. If you return, there will be no

punishment and inquiry of you. And Yuthok can explain and also be a part of the guarantee." Yuthok said, "The Kashag told me to be your guarantor and you should go."